

*Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War, Book II.* By J.S. RUSTEN, ed. New York, NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989. Pp. x and 261. Cloth, \$44.50; paper, \$18.95.

Anyone attempting to read Thucydides requires help. The text is difficult linguistically, structurally, and historiographically. J.S. Rusten has assumed the daunting task of explicating Book II, particularly its "linguistic texture." The result is a highly successful commentary of great value to readers approaching Thucydides' text for the first or the twenty-first time.

The volume contains an intelligent and readable introduction that treats Thucydides' life, historiographical tendencies, and stylistic idiosyncrasies; a text, printed with only a brief critical apparatus in the appendix; and a full commentary with helpful maps.

The commentary is simply superb. Rusten understands Thucydides' Greek and offers just the right advice, particularly on syntax, to even advanced readers. Troubling phrases are translated and analyzed accurately and clearly, not emended or explained away. He judiciously derives meaning from form, generally paying full respect to context. He also evinces excellent literary taste, especially in his interpretations of Pericles' most notorious *sententiae* (see esp. pp. 164-68 on 2.42.4 and pp. 175-78 on 2.45.2).

Teachers will find this commentary invaluable. Indeed, we can now feel confident enough to confront advanced undergraduates with this enormously problematic, but ultimately most rewarding of compositions.

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*Classical Sparta: Techniques behind Her Success.* By ANTON POWELL, ed. Foreword Paul Cartledge. Norman, OK: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1988. Pp. xiv and 196. Cloth. \$32.50.

This edited work includes, besides Cartledge's foreword, seven articles on subjects rarely associated with the standard treatment of Sparta: laughter, drink, inheritance, propaganda, religion, and mendacity. Inheritance is linked with marriage and demography in an interesting attempt to deny the traditionally accepted *kleros* system supposedly devised by Lycurgus, and mendacity is coupled with Sparta's use of the visual. There is also an article which questions Kleomenes' madness.

Since there are so few primary sources for Sparta, each author uses the same material to state his case, thus reinforcing not only the reader's knowledge of the sources, but also the arguments in the previous articles. The authors are all well-known scholars in the field of Spartan history.

This is an interesting book with an interesting concept. The articles are well-written and shed new light on old and neglected material. This book should be a valuable source for both high-school and college teachers who want to show the austere, automaton-like Spartans in a more human form.

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